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## ABSTRACT

This children's book describes how Pablo, a young Mexican boy, and his family celebrate the Day of the Dead (El Dia de Los Muertos). This holiday takes place on the first and second day of November and honors relatives and friends who have died. The holiday celebrates their spiritual return to Earth to share a special feast with the living, and has roots both in the ancient beliefs of the Aztecs and in the Christian feast of All Saints Day. There is much preparation for the holiday: bakers bake the traditional pan de muertos, bread of the dead; candy makers make sugar skulls; children cut out cardboard skeletons; artisans stamp out tissue-paper decorations called estampas; and farmers harvest marigolds, the flowers of the dead. Pablo and his family go to the market to buy food and other items needed for the celebration. When they return, Pablo and his three sisters make a children's altar to invite the angelitos, spirits of dead children, to come back for a visit. The children place baskets of nuts, hot cocoa, sugar skulls, flowers, fruits, and toys on the altar. Finally, Pablo lights incense and a small candle to light the way for the angelitos. The following day Pablo's family prepares the traditional meal for the festival and builds a large altar for the adult spirits. The children and their parents pile the altar high with fruits, flowers, cups of chocolate, and special things that their dead relatives enjoyed during their lifetime. Candles and photographs of the dead are also placed on the altar. Pablo fondly remembers his grandmother who died 2 years ago and thinks about how much he misses her. Families visit with one other and fill their empty baskets with some of the food from the altar and go on to the next relative's house. The next day Pablo and his family visit the cemetery to decorate the graves and tombs of their relatives with fresh flowers. Includes photographs and a glossary of Spanish words. (LP)

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